

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5166

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

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FOR COM/NOAA/NMFS

USEC/USOECN

COPENHAGEN FOR FISHERIES ATTACHE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EFIS, EGEN, NO

SUBJECT: STATE SUPPORT FOR NORWEGIAN FISHERIES IN 1978

1. IN MID-JANUARY THE GOVERNMENT AND THE NORWEGIAN FISHERMEN'S ASSOCIATION AGREED ON THE 1978 LEVELS OF STATE SUPPORT FOR FISHERIES, THUS AVOIDING A THREATENED STRIKE IN THE FISHERIES SECTOR. THE NEW AGREEMENT PROVIDES FOR ECONOMIC SUPPORTS TOTALLING SOME \$80 MILLION. THIS INCLUDES ABOUT \$1 MILLION FROM PREVIOUS ALLOCATIONS AS WELL AS TAX RELIEF MEASURES FOR FISHERMEN WORTH ABOUT \$4 MILLION. SECTORALLY, THE \$80 MILLION IN SUPPORTS IS ALLOCATED AS FOLLOWS:

\$45 MILLION TO ASSIST THE COD SECTOR

\$14 MILLION TO ASSIST THE HERRING SECTOR

\$21 MILLION TO GENERAL SUPPORTS COVERING EQUIPMENT

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BAIT SUSIDIES, ETC.

2. FISHERIES SUPPORTS ARE INSTITUTIONALIZED IN NORWEGIAN ECONOMIC POLICY -- IN THE SIX-YEAR PERIOD 1972-1977 TOTAL SUPPORT FOR FISHERIES TOTALLED ABOUT \$365 MILLION. THE 1978 AMOUNT, HOWEVER, IS LOWER THAN WAS PROVIDED IN BOTH 1976 AND 1977 (THE 1977 AMOUNT WAS JUST OVER \$100 MILLION).

WHILE THERE REMAINS SOME QUESTION AS TO THE EVENTUAL LEVEL OF SUPPORT FOR THE DRIED FISH INDUSTRY -- THE STATE HAS OFFERED SOME \$9 MILLION FOR THE TIME BEING, BUT THE FISHERMEN WON THE RIGHT TO RAISE THE MATTER LATER IF THIS DOES NOT SEEM ENOUGH -- THE 1977 SUPPORT LEVEL IS NOT EXPECTED TO BE REACHED THIS YEAR. (IN PREVIOUS YEARS THE FISHERMEN HAVE GONE BACK TO THE GOVERNMENT DURING THE COURSE OF THE YEAR FOR ADDITIONAL SUPPORT, BUT THIS YEAR'S AGREEMENT SEEMS TO ALLOW THIS ONLY IN THE CASE OF DRIED FISH).

3. COMMENT: A SPOKESMAN FOR THE FISHERIES INDUSTRY HAS SAID THAT GIVEN CURRENT CATCH PREDICTIONS, THE INDUSTRY SHOULD BE ABLE TO MAINTAIN A REASONABLE LEVEL OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITY, AND THIS PLUS THE GOVERNMENT'S SUPPORT SHOULD ASSURE ADEQUATE INCOMES FOR FISHERMEN THIS YEAR. THUS, THE GON HAS PASSED AN EARLY TEST OF ITS NO REAL GROWTH IN INCOMES ECONOMIC POLICY THIS YEAR BECAUSE THE FISHERMEN -- A GROUP WITH SUBSTANTIAL POLITICAL LEVERAGE DESPITE THEIR RELATIVELY SMALL NUMBERS -- ARE SEEN PUBLICLY HERE AS HAVING ACCEPTED A FORMULA WHICH DOES NO MORE THAN PRESERVE THEIR PURCHASING POWER. THIS IS EXPECTED TO ASSIST THE GON IN MAKING A GENERAL CASE FOR NO REAL GROWTH IN INCOMES DURING THE NATION-WIDE WAGE NEGOTIATIONS BEGINNING IN MARCH.
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